

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study attempts to investigate the implementation of critical literacy in a public junior high school in Bandung. As an introduction of this study, this chapter is concerned with providing a general overview of why and how this study is conducted. The chapter is started by description of background of the study. The next part tells about general notions of academic report including research question, purposes of the study, significance of the study, operational definition, and organization of the paper.

1.2 Background of the Study

The emergence of globalization era affects people including students encountering a constant stream of ideas and information from a wide range of texts. This phenomenon requires the EFL teaching to accommodate the need of perceiving the information with critical perspectives. In this sense, the students need to be aware that the texts they meet or create are not neutral and as simple as they see (Wallace, 2003; Wood, Soares, & Watson, 2006). The students should be encouraged to be able to read in active and reflective manner by looking beyond the literal messages and finding multiple meaning from multiple perspectives in the text (Morgan, 1997; Coffey, 2010; Dale & Hyslop, 2010; Lee, 2011; Lewison, et.al, 2002; Wood, Soares, & Watson, 2006). Therefore, the need of critical literacy or being critically literate in reading (and writing) is significant.

The use of texts in critical literacy focuses on the relationship between language and social changes (Coffey, 2010; Emilia, 2010; Gustine, 2013). Critical literacy does not only facilitate students to be critically informed but also empowers them as a part of society to actively participate in a real society by interrogating fairness, equality, and social justice within the texts (Dale & Margison, 2010; Wood,

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CRITICAL LITERACY IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

(A CASE STUDY IN ONE PUBLIC JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN BANDUNG)

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Soares, & Watson, 2006). Accordingly, students' critical awareness towards any kind of issues on society is expected to be developed. It is in accordance with Alwasilah (2001, p. 77) who states that education should be a medium to develop students' critical social awareness as an attempt to minimize social problems.

In Indonesian context, particularly since the reform era, language education is assumed as an essential medium to promote critical capacities which are highly required in this era (Alwasilah, 2001; Emila, 2010; Gustine, 2013). It is further stated that the language education should be redesigned to make the use of language as a vehicle of democracy (Alwasilah, 2001) which can be obtained by being critically literate. Thus, critical literacy is important for two aspects. Firstly, it benefits students individually in being more critically literate to receive such information, biased persuasion, and irrational behavior or belief (Karley, 2010; Leicester & Taylor, 2010). In addition, it also empowers students to be critically conscious about the sensitive issues in the society then take action on it (Dale & Margison, 2010; Wood, Soares, & Watson, 2006). It is relevant with the aim of Indonesian education reflected in the English 2013 curriculum. In this sense, Permendikbud No. 67 states that the 2013 Curriculum puts a strong emphasis on development of students' competences in thinking reflectively to solve social problems in society as well as to develop a better democratic social life. On that point, it further states that some development of learners' competencies will not only benefit them individually, but also for society and nation in general.

The aforementioned explanation has confirmed the significance of critical literacy for students individually and for nation in general. However, the critical literacy development has not been widely researched and implemented in Asian countries including Indonesia. Thus, this study is accordingly conducted to investigate how critical literacy teaching program can assist developing students' critical literacy as well as find out benefits and challenges found during the implementation of this critical literacy teaching program.

1.3 Statements of Problems

This study was conducted to answer the following questions:

1. How does the English teaching program which incorporates critical literacy assist students to be critically literate?
2. What benefits and challenges are found during the incorporation of critical literacy to the English teaching program?

1.4 Purposes of the Study

This study aimed to:

1. investigate how the teaching program which incorporates critical literacy assists students to be critically literate.
2. elaborate the benefits and challenges found during the implementation of teaching program.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The outcome of this investigation was expected to significantly contribute the EFL teaching from three perspectives: Theoretically, the study is expected to enrich the literature on critical literacy pedagogy, particularly in junior high school. In addition, practically, the results of the study are essential in providing English teachers useful information concerning background, activities, and suggestions for successful critical literacy pedagogy implementation. Lastly, the study might be used for the development of policy which can help teachers in improving students' critical literacy capacities, which is significantly urgent in this era.

1.6 Operational Definition

To avoid misunderstanding, the following is an operational definition of term frequently mentioned in this study.

Critical literacy: The use of texts in active and reflective manner to analyze the language construct within the texts in order to encourage students as readers to participate in the real socio-cultural context provided by texts (Kress, 1993 in Emilia, 2005; Morgan, 1997; Lankshear & Knobel, 1998; Wallace, 2003).

1.7 Organization of the Paper

The research paper is organized as follows:

Chapter I : Introduction

This chapter presents background of the research, statements of problem, purposes of the study, significance of the study, operational definition, and organization of the paper.

Chapter II : Theoretical Foundation

This chapter elaborates the theoretical foundation which is relevant with the investigated problem in this study. It also will be the bases which guide in conducting the study.

Chapter III : Research Methodology

This chapter presents in detail the method used in this study including the formulation of problem, research design, participants, data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter IV : Teaching Program

This chapter focuses on a detailed description of the teaching program conducted, stages of activities taken in the process of data collections as well as analyses of some parts of the data

obtained, particularly from classroom observation and students' reflective learning journals.

Chapter V : Findings and Discussion

This chapter presents a delineation of research findings and discussion based on the data obtained from the whole instruments employed.

Chapter VI : Conclusions, Limitations of the Study, and Suggestions

This chapter draws conclusions of the whole research findings which have been obtained. This chapter also provides limitations in this study and proposes suggestions for further study as well as English teaching.